SYNOPSIS

Pastoral Scholar Series: Part 1- Dr. Bill Jackson
This series features interviews and discussions with scholars and academics who reflect on worship and leadership, giving us insights from their expertise and background.

Dr. Bill Jackson taught as a pastor, professor and historian at universities and churches throughout North America. Bill authored a number of books including "*Quest for the Radical Middle*" and "*The Biblical Metanarrative*." Bill passed away in 2015, leaving a legacy of impacting leaders, scholars, pastors and Christians across both his Vineyard tribe and the broader church. Much of the focus and writings of Dr. Jackson continue to influence leaders via the ministry he founded- Radical Middle Ministries at http://radicalmiddleministries.org/



Micro-course: "Dangerous Worship
Acts, the Early Church and Worship"

with Dr. Bill Jackson

I first met Dr. Bill Jackson ("Jax" as he is known to his friends) as a student in one of his classes at St. Stephen's University. His unceasing appetite for understanding and declaring the grand narrative in the Bible was infectious. It was from Jax that I learned the value of reading through the entire bible multiple times per year. He opened up to all of his students the reality of the meta-narrative present in the scriptures. Jax was also a serious worshiper. With his biblical breadth of knowledge, he has a lot to teach the worship leadership community.



-Kim Gentes

1 *Dangerous Worship and the Early Church*

In the book of Acts, what we see is that the presence of God was so powerful in the gatherings of the community that people wouldn't dare join them who weren't fully committed to God. This is powerfully highlighted in the account of Ananias and Sapphira where their sin accounted for their rebuke, judgment and death within the community. Our modern "seeker friendly" approach often looks to "take the edge off" of God.

The early church understood the presence of God as manifest in their midst- people fell down, demons shrieked and people were healed. People who were looking for the Lord would come into the community of the early church and proclaim "there is really a God here!" This, along with the operations of gifts such as prophecy, and word of knowledge, made newcomers aware and reverently cautious of joining in the worship community where the secrets o their hearts could be revealed.

Like the early church, in our communities, real worship must not be about pretending or trying to be a professional musician, but about the heart of worship in which we are bringing one's soul before God and inviting the community to come along this journey together.

2 *The Presence of God In Worship*

The presence of God is not something we try to create or "put on". What we do is simply to bring our broken hearts to God. God will become present as He wills, not us. Part of the job of the worship leader is to be present to what God is doing in our gatherings. We must, of course, "do our work" and make sure that we have put in the practical effort (practice and so forth).

With that being true, the primary thing then is to simply follow God's leading. The preparedness of such practice allows the worship leader to "go with the seasons of God" when it is clear that there should be change or moment previously unrehearsed in the planned times of worship.

3 *Lyrics and Theology*

People learn their doctrine probably more from worship, and the songs they sing than they actually do from preaching. Because people are learning their theology from songs, there is a tremendous responsibility on those who write songs for worship. These songwriters are essentially teachers in the church. As such they should have some theological training. Likewise, as worship leaders putting sets together, the leader needs to evaluate the theology of the songs being used.

4 *Psalms and Biblical Themes in Worship*

The Psalms function as a model for the gambit of human emotion and life. A good study of the Psalms would be a good foundation for worship leader training. The life of Charles Wesley is an example a person taking a lifelong journey of writing songs that show a tremendous breadth of theological themes.